

House Bill 456

By: Representative Stephens of the 164th

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

To amend Article 7 of Chapter 4 of Title 49 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to medical assistance generally, so as to provide for legislation declarations and findings; to require the Department of Community Health and managed care organizations with whom it contracts to include county health departments as providers; to prohibit the Department of Community Health and managed care organizations from requiring county health departments to provide certain or additional services; to prohibit the exclusion of county health departments from the provision of case management services; to provide for an effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

SECTION 1.

Article 7 of Chapter 4 of Title 49 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to medical assistance generally, is amending by adding a new Code section to read as follows:
"49-4-158.

(a) County health departments are declared to be vital and essential components in the delivery of health services in the State of Georgia. The General Assembly finds that the provider networks and critical staff involved in the successes of these programs established by the county health departments over the past 15 years will be lost without these necessary changes. Many rural county health departments will also collapse with the loss of this Medicaid revenue to the managed care organizations.

(b) The Department of Community Health shall require each managed care organization with whom it contracts to include within their respective networks county health departments as providers.

(c) Neither the Department of Community Health nor any managed care organization with whom it contracts shall require a county health department to provide a full range of services, any particular health care service, or additional services in order to be a participating provider.

1 (d)(1) In order to preserve the economic viability of county health departments, managed
2 care organizations shall contract with county health departments and reimburse them for
3 all Medicaid services provided at the same rate and on the same terms as if such services
4 were provided by federally qualified health centers and their 'look alike,' rural health
5 centers, or community health centers. Such payment and terms shall also adhere to the
6 wrap-around provision afforded to these centers.

7 (2) Managed care organizations may not exclude county health departments from
8 providing and being reimbursed for case management services that were provided and
9 reimbursed by Medicaid prior to the advent of the managed care organizations. Such
10 services include Children's First (initial visit including up to four follow-up visits), high
11 risk infant follow-up visits, perinatal case management, and pregnancy related services.
12 The Babies Can't Wait program shall be exempt from participation in the managed care
13 organizations and treated the same as the Children's Medical Services program."

14
15 **SECTION 2.**

16 This Act shall become effective upon its approval by the Governor or upon its becoming law
17 without such approval.

18 **SECTION 3.**

19 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.